

## Message Text

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ORIGIN SNM-02

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DRAFTED BY: S/NM:DHERNST:BB

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R 242131Z MAR 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 066312

FOLLOWING REPEAT VIENTIANE 2056 ACTION SECSTATE INFO  
BANGKOK 24 MARCH.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 2056

DEPT FOR S/NM

BANGKOK FOR AMBASSADOR VANCE AND MR. CHAPMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, LA

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS -- REQUEST FOR S/NM MEMORANDUM ON LEGAL  
ASPECTS OF POSSIBLE LAO GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

1. WE HAVE HAD NUMEROUS INDICATIONS IN RECENT DAYS THAT  
OFFICIALS ON BOTH SIDES OF LAO COALITION (PGNU) ARE CONSIDERING  
IDEA OF ABROGATING 1971 LAO ANTI-NARCOTICS LEGISLATION AND  
POSSIBLY ESTABLISHING A GOVERNMENT ENTITY WHICH WOULD ATTEMPT  
TO SELL OPIUM LEGALLY IN THE WORLD MARKET. SUBJECT MAY COME  
UP AT PGNU CABINET MEETING MARCH 26.

2. DCM DISCUSSED SUBJECT WITH PGNU MINISTER OF JUSTICE  
KHAMKING SOUVANLASY (VIENTIANE SIDE) MARCH 23. IT WAS CLEAR  
THAT KHAMKING DID NOT REALIZE THE VERY EXTENSIVE LEGAL  
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COMPLEXITIES OR POSSIBLE RAMIFICATIONS OF SUCH ACTION FOR

PGNU BOTH AS SIGNATORY TO SINGLE CONVENTION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS AND AS RECIPIENT OF U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND UNFDAC SUPPORT. (WE DOUBT THAT HE OR ANYONE ELSE IN LAOS UNDERSTANDS EITHER THE SYSTEM UNDER WHICH PROSPECTIVE LEGAL BUYERS MUST OBTAIN PERMISSION FROM INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL BOARD AND DIFFICULTY LAOS WOULD BE LIKELY TO ENCOUNTER IN OBTAINING A QUOTA FROM THE INCB.) CONVERSATION ENDED WITH KHAMKING'S ASKING DCM FOR A MEMORANDUM ON LEGAL ASPECTS OF CONTEMPLATED PGNU ACTIONS.

3. DCM DISCUSSED FOREGOING WITH AMBASSADOR VANCE (S/NM) IN BANGKOK, WHERE BOTH ARE ATTENDING EA REGIONAL NARCOTICS CONFERENCE. AMBASSADOR VANCE KINDLY OFFERED SERVICES OF S/NM IN PREPARING AND CABLING TO VIENTIANE A BRIEF SUMMARY OF LEGAL ASPECTS.

4. IN LIGHT OF AMBASSADOR VANCE'S OFFER, WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING FROM S/NM ON PRIORITY BASIS AN OUTLINE OF LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS INHERENT IN CONTEMPLATED PGNU ACTIONS. SUCH INFORMATION IF RECEIVED QUICKLY COULD BE USED TO ADVANTAGE.

5. WE HOPE MEANWHILE THAT OUR ALERTING SENIOR OFFICIALS TO FACT THAT SERIOUS LEGAL COMPLICATIONS WOULD ARISE (AMBASSADOR MADE SAME POINT TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR PHENG PHONGSAVAN MARCH 24) WILL FORESTALL HASTY AND ILL-ADVISED DECISIONS AT MARCH 26 CABINET MEETING.  
WHITEHOUSE UNQUOTE  
KISSINGER

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